

Message Text

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16

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-10 SCS-03 SCA-01 OPR-02 A-01 OC-05

CCO-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 EB-07 AID-05 DHA-02 SCCT-01 SY-05 FBO-02

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O 180938Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3572

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN IMMEDIATE

COMIDEASTFOR IMMEDIATE

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA IMMEDIATE

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI IMMEDIATE

CNO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0797

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS PINT ET US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR SEPT 18

ON TRACT DELTA INCIDENT

REF: ASMARA 0796 (DTG 180910Z SEP 75)

1. I MET THIS MORNING, AS AGREED, WITH GEN. GETACHEW,,
GEN. WORKU, AND COL. TELAHUN, ACCOMPANIED BY LT. CLARK
HILL, OIC NAVCOMMUNIT, AND DOUGLAS MCALLISTER, OPERATIONS
MANAGER OF CISCO.

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2. AFTER BRIEFLY DESCRIBING THE INCIDENTS OF YESTERDAY AND EMPHASIZING THE UNWARRANTED, DANGEROUS AND BRUTAL TREATMENT OF THE AMERICAN REMOVAL PARTY AT TRACT DELTA, I TOLD GEN. GETACHEW THAT OUR AMBASSADOR IN ADDIS ABABA HAD PROTESTED THIS INCIDENT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THAT I WAS HERE TO DO THE SAME. NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, THE ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS FASTENED ON THE INCIDENTAL WINDOW BREAKING, WHICH THEY DESCRIBED AS ROCK THROWING, ON THE PART OF SOME OF THE AMERICANS AS THE REASON FOR THE HOSTILE TREATMENT ACCORDED THEM BY THE ETHIOPIAN TROOPS. I EMPHASIZED THE FACT THAT LT. HILL AND HIS PARTY WERE OPERATING UNDER ORDERS TO DESTROY WHATEVER COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT COULD NOT BE EXTRACTED AND SAID THAT THE WINDOW BREAKING WAS UNFORTUNATE, REGRETTABLE, BUT INCIDENTAL AND WAS PROMPTLY STOPPED BY LT. HILL. GEN. GETACHEW EMPHASIZED THAT, NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS PROBABLY THIS WHICH PROMPTED THE SOLDIERS ON THE SCENE TO TRY TO TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT IT. GEN. GETACHEW DID DEPLORE THE METHODS USED AND EXTENDED AN OFFICIAL APOLOGY.

3. GEN. WORKU AND COL. TELAHUN INDICATED THAT A COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AND AN INVESTIGATION IS IN PROGRESS INTO ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE EVENTS AT TRACT DELTA, INCLUDING YESTERDAY'S INCIDENT. AFTER GEN. GETACHEW MADE IT CLEAR TO COL. TELAHUN THAT ANY REQUESTS FOR AMERICAN PERSONNEL TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE WERE TO BE MADE TO ME, I PROMISED OUR COOPERATION IN THE EFFORT. COL. TELAHUN'S INITIAL BELLIGERENCY AND ANTAGONISM WAS SOMEWHAT MUTED BY THE END OF THE DISCUSSION. HE EVIDENTLY FEELS THAT HIS OWN COMPETENCE HAS BEEN CALLED INTO QUESTION BY THE REPORTED BEHAVIOR OF THE TROOPS AND THE SUSPICIONS HE KNOWS SOME OF THE AMERICANS ENTERTAIN ABOUT PROBABLY LOOTING AND SOME DESTRUCTION BY ETHIOPIAN SOLDIERS AT TRACT DELTA OVER THE WEEKEND. GEN. GETACHEW, IN ADDITION TO OFFERING HIS APOLOGY, ISSUED ORDERS TO GEN. WORKU THAT TROOPS ARE TO BE NOTIFIED THAT AMERICAN DISPOSITION OF AMERICAN PROPERTY IS NOT TO BE INTERFERED WITH AND THAT

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AMERICANS ARE FREE TO DO AS THEY WISH WITH THEIR PROPERTY.

4. I QUESTIONED BOTH GENERALS AS TO WHETHER IT WAS THE INTENTION OF THE ETHIOPIAN ARMY TO OCCUPY TRACT DELTA. ALTHOUGH THEY REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE, THEIR RESPONSE WAS EVASIVE AND I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IN FACT THEY PROBABLY WILL EVENTUALLY WANT TO UTILIZE TRACT DELTA PERMANENTLY. I REQUESTED THAT WE BE

NOTIFIED SO THAT SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.

5. NOTING THAT COL. TELAHUN HAD TAKEN THE NAMES OF THE EIGHT ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES OF CISCO/PA&E WHO HAD ASSISTED IN THE REMOVAL OF PROPERTY AT TRACT DELTA, BUT HAD NOT RPT NOT PARTICIPATED IN EITHER THE DESTRUCTION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT OR IN THE SMASHING OF WINDOWS, I URGED GEN. GETACHEW TO BEAR IN MIND NOT ONLY THAT THESE EMPLOYEES BORE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANYTHING THAT OCCURED AT TRACT DELTA BUT THAT THEIR CONTINUING AVAILABILITY AT THEIR JOB WAS VITAL TO THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE POWER PLANT AT TRACT ECHO UPON WHICH ALLOF US DEPEND. IT WAS CLEAR HOWEVER THAT PART OF THE RESENTMENT, AT LEAST OF COL. TELAHUN, STEMMED FROM WHAT HE APPEARED TO INTERPRET AS AN EFFORT ON OUR PART TO EXTEND AMERICAN PROTECTION TO THE ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES. THIS WAS NOT THE CASE AS WAS MADE CLEAR, AND I HOPE THE DISCUSSION WILL HAVE SOME EFFECT IN SPARING THESE ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES EXCESSIVE HARASSMENT.

6. COMMENT: THE GENERAL IMPRESSION I WAS GIVEN BY GEN. GETACHEW WAS ONE OF CONCERN THAT A CLASH SUCH AS THIS TOOK PLACE, SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH THE HANDLING OF IT BY HIS SUBORDINATES, AND A GENUINE DESIRE TO DO WHAT HE COULD TO PREVENT REOCCURRENCE. NEVERTHELESS, HE EXPLICITLY URGED US TO BE UNDERSTANDING WITH THE PROBLEMS HE HAS WITH AN UNDISCIPLINED SOLDIERY AND TO BE PATIENT. HE REQUESTED ME TO CONVEY THIS TO MY AMBASSADOR AND INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE SUBMITTING A REPORT TO PMAC CHAIRMAN GEN. TEFERI BANTE. NO NOTED THAT HE INTENDED TO CITE THE WINDOW BREAKING INCIDENT AS THE PRECIPITANT IN THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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